

## Camp Movements

A cable from the American Red Cross representative at Geneva in the middle of February referred to "the great mass movement of prisoners now marching on foot westward to beyond line Stettin-Berlin-Görlitz-Chemnitz-Carlsbad, comprising camps and working detachments in Wehrkreise (military districts) 1, 20, 21, 8, eastern half of 2, 3, and southern half of 4."

Most of the main camps for American prisoners of war in Germany, based on official data available to December 31, 1944, were definitely included in the foregoing military districts, or the designated portions thereof. These camps, specifically, were Stalags II B, III B, III C, Ofag 64, and Stalags Luft III and IV. Other camps housing substantial numbers of Americans in military district 4 were: Stalags IV A, IV B, IV C, IV D, and IV F, but not all these Stalags were in the southern half of military district 4. About 60 percent of all American prisoners of war held by Germany at the beginning of 1945 were in Stalags in military districts 2, 3, and 4, and Stalags Luft III and IV.

On February 13, the War Department and the Department of State jointly announced that official information had been received with respect to the evacuation westward of American prisoners of war formerly detained in camps in eastern Germany. This announcement stated:

All the camps in East Prussia, Poland, and that part of Pomerania east of the Oder River are being moved westward. This includes among others Stalag Luft IV, Stalag II A, and Stalag II B. Similarly, Stalags III B and III C are being moved westward. Stalag Luft III is being evacuated to the southwest. Prisoners of war in the northern part of Silesia are being moved northwest and those in southern Silesia, particularly at Stalag VIII B and Stalag 344, are being moved southwest across Bohemia. It is understood that the officers from Ofag 64 are being sent to Stalag III A at Luchenwalde, between Berlin and Leipzig. The destination of Stalag III A at Luchenwalde, between Berlin and Leipzig. The destination of the other prisoners has not been confirmed.

Information concerning the relocation of prisoner of war camps is constantly being received. This information will be made public as soon as it is possible to confirm these relocations. Pending a notification through the usual official sources, next of kin are urged to continue to address communications to individual prisoners of war to their last known address.

The lack of information about the ultimate destination, the cable from the American Red Cross representative at Geneva pointed out, made it "extremely difficult to make plans to supply very pressing needs of moving prisoners, as well as of those already in camps," but assurance was given that the International Committee of the Red Cross "is making every effort to overcome present grave situation."

Article 7 of the Geneva Convention of 1929 Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War states:

Prisoners of war shall be evacuated within the shortest possible period after their capture, to depots located in a region far enough from the zone of combat for them to be out of danger.

Only prisoners who, because of wounds or sickness, would run greater risks by being evacuated than by remaining where they are may be temporarily kept in a dangerous zone.

Prisoners shall not be needlessly exposed to danger while awaiting their evacuation from the combat zone.

Evacuation of prisoners on foot may normally be effected only by stages of 20 kilometers [12 1-2 miles] a day, unless the necessity of reaching water and food depots requires longer stages.

The latest information on camp movements is given on page 4.

## German Camp Reports

(Continued from page 4)

food and other Red Cross supplies were also inadequate to meet the sudden and heavy demands that had been made on them. Shipments from Geneva had been delayed en route across Germany, but every effort was being made to fill the camp's needs.

### Stalag VII B

A Delegate of the International Red Cross visited Stalag VII B on December 12 last, on which date the camp strength was 11,570 prisoners of war—including 925 Americans, of whom 8 were noncoms. Only 63 Americans, including a physician, were at the base camp, the remainder being on work detachments. The Delegate conversed with the spokesmen of 16 detachments.

In the Stalag, the Americans occupied "one entire new barrack, small, but well heated, and without vermin." The official rations were reported to be insufficient, but were supplemented by home-grown vegetables. Carloads of Red Cross packages were arriving regularly. Reserves were low, however, "because the storage depot had recently been destroyed by bombardment."

The camp Lazarett was reported to be well equipped, with an American physician (John Pfeffer) in attendance. Out of 292 patients in the Lazarett, 32 were Americans. There were also 35 Americans (out of 81 prisoners) in the camp infirmary. Some Americans at Stalag VII B stated that they had been without news from home for 9 months. The Delegate's report stated "camp atmosphere good, general impression favorable."

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# PRISONERS OF WAR BULLETIN

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WASHINGTON, D. C.

APRIL 1945

## Delivering Relief Supplies in Germany

In an effort to relieve the transportation crisis caused by the inability of the German railroads to furnish an adequate number of freight cars for moving prisoner of war supplies from International Red Cross warehouses in Switzerland to the camps, the Swiss government early in March furnished a solid train of 50 cars which were loaded with Red Cross food packages and medical and other supplies for delivery to Stalag VII A at Moosburg, in Bavaria. A delegate of the International Red Cross, as well as a German escort, accompanied the train, and, while the Swiss authorities agreed only to furnish this first train, it was expected that additional ones of the same size would soon follow.

In all European countries, and even in the United States, railroad freight cars are in the most urgent demand, and this action on the part of the Swiss authorities was one more step on their part to do everything possible to maintain the tenuous line of supply to Allied prisoners of war, who, in large part, have been moved under panic conditions within the narrowing confines of Germany's borders.

### Shipments from Lübeck

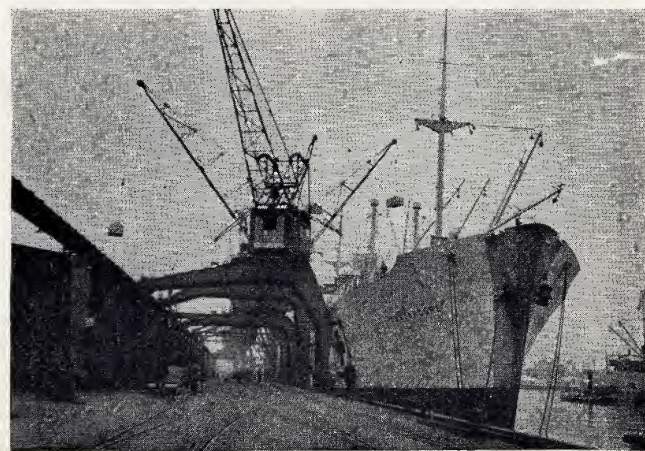
At about the same time the solid train left Switzerland for Moosburg, a convoy of 25 motor trucks (five of which carried gasoline and lubricants, and one medical supplies) left Switzerland with Swiss drivers. The six trucks with gasoline and medical supplies went to the Lübeck area in north Germany to service the International Red Cross trucks, and some which were being operated by enterprising camp spokesmen who had obtained them locally, for delivering food packages from Lübeck to camps

in northwest Germany, as well as to prisoners marching across northern Germany from camps formerly in the east.

Many of the prisoners marching along the northern route are Americans, and, by the end of the first week in March, International Red Cross trucks operating from Lübeck made possible the distribution of over 100,000 standard food packages to prisoners in camps and on the march in the northern area. At the same time, about 35,000 food packages were leaving Lübeck daily by rail for camps in northern Germany. The risk taken by the American Red Cross some months ago in laying down in Lübeck, under International Red Cross supervision, over

1,000,000 food packages has already justified itself. Stocks in Lübeck are being replenished from Sweden as fast as they are being taken out.

The remaining 19 trucks in the convoy which left Switzerland in early March proceeded to the Carlsbad-Marienbad region (in what is frequently called the Sudetenland), carrying food and medical supplies to meet the large body of prisoners marching from camps in the Silesian region (such as Stalag VIII B, Stalag 344, WK 8 B.A.B. 20 and 21, and so forth). A second convoy of 48 American Red Cross and Canadian Red Cross trucks went forward from Switzerland in 4 columns of 12 trucks each on March 17, 18, and 19.



Unloading prisoner of war supplies from the M. S. Travancore at Göteborg, Sweden, for transshipment to Germany.



Hongkong Military Internment Camp, Kowloon Section, was also visited by the Delegate, where an additional 124 civilian internees were housed, including 5 Americans. Camp health was reported to be good, with a British doctor available. Thorough school facilities for 33 children were provided in a modern church building.







## Latest Information on Camp Movements

(By cable from Geneva)

Red Cross trucks operating out of Lubeck in the north and Moosburg in the south succeeded, during March, in getting substantial quantities of food packages to the prisoners of war evacuated from camps in the east who were still hiking across Germany. These marching columns were scattered over very wide area. In the middle of March, for example, an advance group from Stalag 344 was 30 miles east of Carlsbad while the rear of the column was in the vicinity of Bohmisch Leipa—the distance between these two points being nearly 60 miles. Likewise, the Stalag VIII B column was spread from Schlan, near Mielnik, to the Koniggratz region—a distance of about 75 miles. British prisoners constituted a large part of the southern columns, but they also contained Americans.

Similar situations existed in northern Germany, where about 100,000 American and Allied prisoners evacuated from camps in the second military district (particularly, in the case of Americans, from Stalags IIB and IID and Stalag Luft IV) were walking across Germany to camps in the tenth military district. It was reported at the end of February that these men "were grouped in the vicinity of the Stettiner Haft, whence they will be conducted to Oflag X D (at Fischbeck), Oflag X C (at Lubeck), and Stalag X B (at Bremerhorde)."

The Red Cross trucks delivering supplies to the marching columns had to search for the men not only on main highways but on secondary roads. The trucks operated under German escort, and, considering the chaotic transportation conditions which must now exist inside Germany, the authorities there have manifested a cooperative spirit in getting food, medicines, and other relief supplies to the men. It is an entirely new development in warfare to have Red Cross trucks, supplied and serviced

by one belligerent, operating far and wide in the territory of an enemy belligerent.

Airmen from the Dulag Luft transit camp area are now being assigned to "the new Stalag Luft at Nurnberg-Langwasser," according to a cable received in the middle of March. This new Luft Stalag has not yet been designated by number.

Stalag Luft III at Sagan was evacuated on January 27. The men were given Red Cross food packages and were furnished some additional food by the Germans en route. The men were marched for three days, on secondary roads, to Spremberg—a distance of about 40 miles. They slept in barns along the roads. At Spremberg, the Americans from the south and center compounds were divided into groups of 2,000 and sent by train on February 1 to Moosburg (Stalag VII A), except for a few who were sent to Stalag III A at Luckenwalde. Americans from the west compound were dispatched by train from Spremberg to Nurnberg, and thence to Stalag XIII D, about eight miles from the city, which is probably "the new Stalag Luft" previously referred to. All letter mail from airmen, however, should continue to be addressed to Stalag Luft III until new directions are given.

A cable from Geneva on March 10 stated, "Oflag 64 proceeding by rail toward Hammelburg." An earlier message had reported that about 500 American (ground force) officers from Oflag 64, "travelling by rail, were near Parchim (southeast of Wismar on a line between Wismar and Berlin), awaiting transport for Hammelburg." Oflag XIII B and Stalag XIII C are the only prisoners of war camps known to be in the vicinity of Hammelburg. Several hundred American officers formerly at Oflag 64 were liberated by the advancing Russian armies and have returned to the United States.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(Continued from page 6)

war and civilian internees, the fixing of returns and the payment of federal income taxes. Many have enacted similar legislation in respect to state income taxes.

*Q. My son, who was captured by the Germans last September, has been in the war bond allotment. Will the continued while he is a prisoner of war?*

*A. Bond allotments that were in effect when a missing or prisoner of war was last reported to the War Relocation Authority commenced prior to January 1, 1944, were discontinued as of the first of the month in which absence occurred. Those in effect when a missing or prisoner of war was last reported commenced after January 1, 1944, are being continued, in the absence of a request from the allottee, until discontinuance.*

*Q. How soon may the next issue of the War Relocation Authority expect to learn that a soldier reported missing in action has been captured, and how long after will it be before his permanent address is known?*

*A. In the case of Germany, the location of capture, with the present camp address, has usually been received within three months. Recently, however, the German report of service appears to have lost ground. In the last few weeks, relatives have received the first notice of capture in a letter from a serviceman sent from a German camp. In such cases, relatives should promptly notify the Office of the Provost Marshal General, War Relocation Authority, Washington 25, D. C., to enclose a photostatic copy (showing both sides) or the original of the prisoner's communication.*

# PRISONERS OF WAR BULLETIN

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MAY 1945

## Reports on German Camps

Cross warehouses in Switzerland, both by train and by truck convoys, to meet the rapidly growing need.

On January 27 the Americans at Stalag VII A had a five weeks' reserve of standard food packages, but new arrivals at the camp quickly disposed of this reserve supply. The principal grievances of the men at the end of January were reported to be overcrowding, which has since grown worse, lack of fuel for cooking, and inadequate bathing facilities. The camp theater was being transformed to accommodate new arrivals.

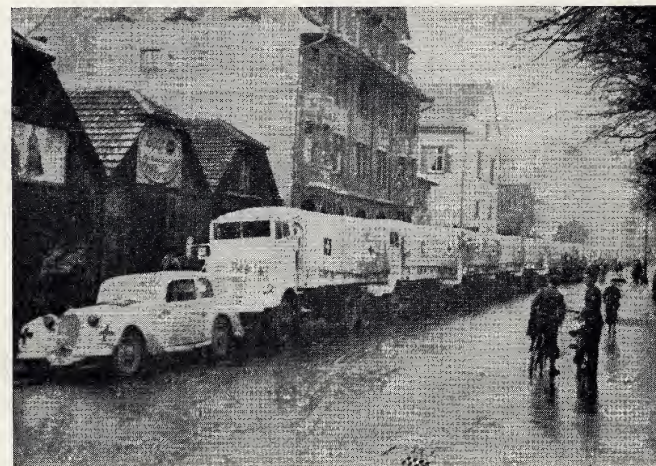
Detachments of from 1,000 to 2,000 men were sent daily (Sundays excepted) by train from Stalag VII A to work in Munich. They re-

turned by train the same day, travel time and work consuming about 12 hours.

### Stalags V A and V B

On January 9 an International Red Cross Delegate visited Stalag V B, at Villingen, in southwest Germany not far from the Swiss border. The camp then held 479 Americans in transit from the western front. The men had reached Stalag V B, the Delegate's report stated, in an exhausted condition after a four-day hike. From Stalag V B American prisoners were being transferred to Stalag V A, at Ludwigsburg, in the vicinity of Stuttgart.

A later report from the Interna-



A truck convoy entering Germany, from Switzerland, with Red Cross supplies for prisoners of war. The trucks are painted white to increase visibility. They also carry the Red Cross emblem and the flag of Switzerland to ensure protection.

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